SUBJECTS.

(7) The distribution of pamphlets by the Agricultural Department containing the results of experiments with paddy.

(8) The improving of the breed of cattle by the organisation of cattle shows and by improving the work of the Veterinary officers.

(9) The provision of grazing grounds for cattle in the reserved forests.

(10) The construction of good roads for the transport of manure. The Member said that the road from Thazhakudi to Veeranamangalam on the banks of the Palayar should be connected with the main road from Nagercoil to Thittivila to facilitate the transport of manure from Aramboly.

(11) The establishment of a depot for chemical manures at Nagercoil to supply the people in Nanjanad.

Mr. M. Sivathanu Pillai (Member, Agastiswaram taluk) agreed with what the other Members said on the subject and added that, for both the crops together, South Travancore required 310 days' irrigation. In any case, it could not go below 285 days and he prayed that the Reservoir might be opened on the 15th Medam every year. He also suggested the desirability of forming an Irrigation Board to see to the timely and efficient distribution of the Kodayar water.

The next point mentioned by him was about the need for maintaining and improving the two miles of road from Parakkay to Thamarakulam. The question of maintaining that road had been under consideration since 1076, but nothing was done till now. As the road was of great importance to the agriculturists, he requested that immediate action be taken to put the road in order.

The Member next referred to the circumstance that constant breaches occurred owing to the existence of the Mission dam. He regretted that there had never been an impartial effort on the part of the officers to trace the cause of those breaches to the existence of the Mission dam. The Government spent about Rs. 5,000 annually to improve the breaches. He said that, if that dam were completely removed, the recurring loss to the Government and the great havoc done to several acres of land in the neighbourhood could both be saved.

He then advocated the necessity for ascertaining the requirements of South Travancore in the matter of grazing grounds through a committee and the early reservation of sufficient grounds for the purpose.

Lastly, the Member represented that there were several encroachments on the road from Suchindram to the Manakudi lake. Some lands had also been registered as *puduval* and a few leased out on *kuthagapattom* to the ryots. He requested early orders to the Revenue Department to remove the encroachments and secure a uniform width throughout the distance even by acquiring small patches of land wherever necessary.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

54. The need for Government aid in respect of agriculture.

Mr. Kochukunju Kurup (Member, Kunnathur taluk) suggested the following means for the amelioration of the depressed condition of the agriculturists :—

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SUBJECTS.

(1) The ryots should be allowed to plant trees on *poramboke* lands, as in other countries, under special conditions. (2) The ryots should be allowed to cultivate portions of proposed reserves and reclamations from backwaters. (3) The Irrigation Regulation should be brought into force in all the taluks and irrigation works such as canals, culverts &c., should be constructed under the guidance of the Tahsildar and the Director of Agriculture. (4) The Director of Agriculture should be given more powers and discretion in affording relief to the agricultural ryots. (5) Manure depots should be opened in all the taluks. An agricultural farm and a manure depot should be opened in the Kunnathur taluk and remedies suggested from time to time for the prevention of cocoanut palm disease. (6) The useless trees standing on the sides of public roads and causing inconvenience to the people should be allowed to be cut and removed by the people in case they agreed to plant cocoanut, jack, and other valuable trees instead. (7) The tanks used for irrigation purposes should not be registered in the names of private persons without the knowledge of the ryots owning lands in the *yela*.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

55. The difficulties of Punja cultivation and some suggestions for remedying the same.

Mr. A. N. Krishna Pillai (Member, Kottayam taluk) said that *punja* cultivation, as compared with other cultivations, was far more expensive and yielded the least income. It was more expensive because it involved two new items, *viz.*, construction of bunds and the drainage. Some 20 years ago many unregistered lands were available in the vicinity from which the ryots found materials for their bunds without any cost. Now they had to procure them from long distances at enormous cost. The wages of labor had risen high and that had increased the cost of draining the *punja* fields to Rs. 8 per acre. Canals played a conspicuous part in *punja* cultivation. They were not only useful for irrigating the fields but for manuring them, as they also brought alluvial soil and deposited it on the fields, which was valuable as manure. Several of those canals had now died out of existence, having been registered away by the Revenue and Settlement Departments. The few that remained were useless for cultivation purposes.

Coming next to the suggestions, the Member said that the canals that existed should be improved. In Kottayam, the Arthutty canal was improved by the Government at a cost of Rs. 6,000, but it was now absolutely useless. For, without studying local conditions, a flood-gate was put across it. A portion of the gate had now been washed away to the Vembanad la'e. In the interests of agriculture he requested that the gate should be completely removed, for it not only prevented the manurial soil being deposited in the *punja* fields, but also obstructed the free passage of boats. He said that a memorial signed by the public of Kottayam asking for the removal of the flood-gate should have reached the Government. At a meeting convened by the Dewan Peishkar of Kottayam, the people expressed the unanimous opinion that the flood-gate should be removed.

Dewan.— The Chief Engineer says that, if the flood-gate be removed, water will rush into the canal under great pressure and it might cause the scouring of the sides.

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